



Division of Labour

Karl Marx makes use of the original distinction between **Manufacture**, meaning the organised co-operation of many workers in a single workshop, and **Industrial Production**, which is the same, but with powered machinery. In modern usage, this distinction is not always clear. Marx in his Chapter 14 (**attached**) says this:

“That co-operation which is based on division of labour, assumes its typical form in manufacture, and is the prevalent characteristic form of the capitalist process of production throughout the manufacturing period properly

so called. That period, roughly speaking, extends from the middle of the 16th to the last third of the 18th century.”

The rest of Section 1 of this chapter is a description of division of labour under the early form of capitalism: Manufacture.

Then, in Section 2, Marx describes the effect on an individual or “detail labourer”, and on production, as a consequence of division of labour.

In Section 3, Marx looks at the gain that is made when serial production can be achieved, as opposed to batch or individual piece production.

“The different detail processes, which were successive in time, have become simultaneous, go on side by side in space. Hence, production of a greater quantum of finished commodities in a given time. [11] This simultaneity, it is true, is due to the general co-operative form of the process as a whole; but Manufacture not only finds the conditions for co-operation ready to hand, it also, to some extent, creates them by the sub-division of handicraft labour. On the other hand, it accomplishes this social organisation of the labour-process only by riveting each labourer to a single fractional detail.”

In Section 4, Marx compares division of labour in a factory, with division of labour in society.

Section 5 is a readable essay on division of labour as treated by

the bourgeois Political Economists, including Adam Smith.

In short, this is another chapter of “Capital” that you can conquer without difficulty.

Image: Walter Crane was a 19th-century artist who illustrated many socialist pamphlets. This particular work was done for May Day, the Workers’ Day, in 1895.

- The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [Capital V1, C14, Division of Labour and Manufacture.](#)
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